

NM Healthy Food Financing Fund FY27 Public Scoring Rubric

Eligible, complete applications are evaluated on the information submitted. The rubric has 125 possible points. VMC first screens applications for completeness and eligibility, then scores them using the criteria below. Applications receiving at least 88 points in VMC scoring advance to independent review committee scoring. VMC screening scores are not averaged with committee scores.

HOW APPLICATIONS ARE REVIEWED

Applications are due November 18, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time. If VMC identifies missing information and sends a correction notice before the deadline, the applicant has 48 hours from that notice to respond, even if the period ends after the deadline. VMC checks required materials, eligibility, allowable costs and whether the project can be completed and funds spent by December 17, 2027. The review committee scores advancing applications independently.

SCORING CRITERIA

1. PROJECT CATEGORY | 10 POINTS

The selected category is assessed for its contribution to New Mexico's food system.

- **FOOD RETAIL** projects are evaluated for expanded healthy food access, SNAP or nutrition incentive plans, capacity and local sourcing.
- **PROCESSING AND VALUE ADDED** projects are assessed for healthy staple foods and increased service to New Mexico grown buyers or retailers in low food access areas.
- **AGGREGATION, DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORTATION** projects are assessed for capacity, reach and buyer relationships.
- **PRODUCTION** projects are assessed for operating history, expansion plans, New Mexico Grown status and market demand.
- **CLIMATE SMART PREPRODUCTION** projects are assessed for producer need, practical deployment and measurable benefit.

2. ORGANIZATION, EXPERIENCE AND PARTNERSHIPS | 15 POINTS

Relevant team experience, staffing, resources and meaningful supplier, buyer or community partnerships, including each partner's role in the proposed project.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACES SERVED | 15 POINTS

Who will benefit, with attention to underserved communities, food access challenges, approximate reach and how the project will address those needs.

4. PROJECT SUMMARY AND CATALYTIC NEED | 15 POINTS

A clear project and funding need, eligible activities, and how HFFF support will make a meaningful difference over the next 12 to 24 months.

5. NEW AND PREVIOUS HFFF APPLICANTS | 10 POINTS

If you have not received an FY23–FY25 HFFF primary grant, you automatically receive 10 points. If you have, reviewers will look at what you accomplished with that funding, why you need another grant, and how you plan to sustain the project. Receiving only an FY26 technical assistance award does not count as a previous primary grant.

6. BUSINESS MODEL AND SUSTAINABILITY | 15 POINTS

How the organization operates, generates revenue or support, and plans to sustain the project's benefits over time.

7. TIMELINE AND READINESS | 15 POINTS

Realistic milestones, current readiness and a feasible path to complete the project and spend funds by December, 2027.

8. PROJECT IMPACT AND PRIORITIES | 15 POINTS

Specific, measurable outcomes connected to the HFFF priorities relevant to the project.

HFFF PRIORITY AREAS

- Increasing food access for historically under-resourced communities
- Creating and retaining jobs in the food and agricultural supply chain
- Strengthening in-state markets for small and mid-scale food and agricultural operations
- Improving food-safe storage, aggregation, distribution and transportation
- Supporting regenerative agricultural practices

9. PRIMARY GRANT BUDGET | 15 POINTS

An itemized budget with allowable costs, supporting quotes or estimates, and a clear connection between expenses and project goals. If other funding is needed, explain its source and status.

TOTAL: 125 POINTS**OPTIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT**

If you are not selected for a primary grant, you may choose to be considered for an alternative award of \$20,000 and up to 10 hours of technical assistance. To be considered, you must provide a separate \$20,000 budget and a brief narrative explaining how you would use those funds.

This option is voluntary. Your technical assistance budget does not add points to your primary grant application score, and requesting it does not guarantee an award.